



AHA Chapter

THE NEWSLETTER OF

The HUMANIST ASSOCIATION of CENTRAL CONNECTICUT

March 2004



CSH Affiliate

The Rest of the Story on Passion Plays

Join us at 7:30 p.m. on March 15th at 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden to learn the background of Passion Plays in our program entitled "The Passion and Passion Plays—From Ancient Times to Mel Gibson and Beyond."

While the media have been giving extensive attention to Mel Gibson's film, there has been scant coverage of the history and background of Passion plays or Easter dramas, as these theatrical productions are also called. In the U.S., these productions are now shown by just about every Christian denomination, including evangelicals, Baptists, Pentecostals and mainline Protestants as well as Catholics. In Europe, from the Middle Ages up until World War II, the performance of the Passion story on Good Friday was often followed by a frenzied mob attacking Jewish neighborhoods in a pogrom involving murder, looting and vandalism. Although recent Passion productions have not been associated with violence, Gibson and his controversial movie have caused concern that attacks may return, especially in Europe.

The presenters at our March 15 meeting will be David Schafer, Bonnie Cohen, and Manny Ratafia.

As usual, we will meet at 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden, starting with coffee and conversation at 7:30 p.m. followed by the presentation at 8:00 p.m. All are invited, so bring a friend!

63rd Annual AHA Conference

Early registration for the American Humanist Association annual conference closes April 4th, so call the AHA at (800) 837-3792 or visit them online at www.americanhumanist.org soon! The conference will be held May 6th to 9th at the Stardust Resort and Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Calendar of Events

MARCH, 2004

Mon., 1	Dinner at Pasta Fair, 262 Boston Post Road, Orange	7:00 p.m.
Mon., 15	Monthly meeting, USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden	7:30 p.m.
	Coffee and conversation	7:30 p.m.
	Main program. <i>The Passion and Passion Plays from Ancient Times to Mel Gibson and Beyond</i>	8:00 p.m.
Sun., 21	Board meeting, USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden	2:00 p.m.
Wed., 24	Dinner at the Curtis House, 506 Main Street South, Woodbury	7:00 p.m.
Sat., 27	Humanist Conversations, USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden — <i>The God Gene</i>	2:30 p.m.

APRIL, 2004

Mon., 5	Dinner at Pasta Fair, 262 Boston Post Road, Orange	7:00 p.m.
Mon., 19	Monthly meeting, USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden	7:30 p.m.
	Coffee and conversation	7:30 p.m.
	Main program. Doug Peary — <i>Corliss Lamont, Humanist Hero</i>	8:00 p.m.
Sat., 24	Humanist Conversations, USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden	2:30 p.m.
Sun., 25	Board meeting, USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden	2:00 p.m.
Wed., 28	Dinner at the Curtis House, 506 Main Street South, Woodbury	7:00 p.m.

WWW.CTHUMANIST.ORG

David Schafer to Speak at Harvard

David Schafer will be speaking on "Let's Re-think Humanism, Imaginatively" for the Humanist Association of Massachusetts on Sunday, February 29 at 1:30 p.m. The talk will be held in Hall A of Harvard University's Science Center. The Science Center is on Oxford Street in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Conversations

Join us for a lively conversation about the controversial topic, "The God Gene — what are its implications and what can we do about it?" on Saturday, March 27 at 2:30 p.m. at 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden. For a packet of readings, contact the discussion facilitator, Ellen Snyder, at ellensnyder@hotmail.com or phone (203) 393-1313.

www.cthumanist.org

E-mail List

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Social Dinners

Join us for dinner at 7 p.m. on Monday, March 1st at Pasta Fair, on the Boston Post Road, Route 1, in Orange, or on Wednesday, March 24th at the Curtis House in Woodbury.

Or join us in April on Monday the 5th at Pasta Fair, or Wednesday 28th at the Curtis House.

If you plan to attend one of the dinners, please RSVP to Carol Stone at (203) 264-8546 or editor@cthumanist.org.

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Book Discussion April 10

“Terror in the Name of God: Why Religious Militants Kill” by Jessica Stern

This fascinating book is readily available from local and online bookstores, and many local libraries. Don't miss this excuse to read a great book! In addition to her extensive expertise on the subject, Jessica Stern spent four years interviewing religious extremists for this book. This is her second book on the topic of terrorism, in addition to her numerous articles on the subject since 1991.

No mere academic, after two years analyzing the prospects for theft or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons in Russia as a postdoctoral fellow at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, she spent a year at the National Security Council at the White House. She led several interagency groups while there, including one responsible for nuclear smuggling and fissile materials security. She helped oversee the final stages of a successful secret operation which transferred over half a ton of highly-enriched uranium from Kazakhstan to safe storage in the United States. In addition, the main character in the Dream Works movie, *The Peacemaker*, is modeled on Jessica during this part of her career. Currently she is lecturer in Public Policy at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

Jessica Stern's bachelors degree in chemistry is from Barnard College. Her master's of science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology specialized in policy implications of science and technology. Her doctorate in public policy is from Harvard University.

Doug Peary and Gabriella Brand have been kind enough to open their home at 63 Forest Hill Road in North Haven on Saturday, April 10 at 2:30 p.m. for this book discussion. Refreshments will be served.

These directions are from 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden.

Take a left out of the parking lot onto Hartford Turnpike. At the traffic light, turn left onto Skiff Street. At the next traffic light, turn right onto Ridge Road. Take your first left onto Buell Street and then your first left again onto Forest Hill Road. The third house before the end of the street, number 63 is a white single-story home with black trim. Their number is (203) 288-5852.

Mystic/Noank Discussion Series

This humanist discussion group will meet on Saturday, March 6, at 10:15 a.m. at the Mystic and Noank Library. The topic is free trade. Background material for this discussion is an article from the February 20, 2004 edition of the New York Times entitled “The Dark Side of Free Trade,” by Bob Herbert. For more information and directions, phone George Marcus at (860) 449-0800 or email gmingroton@snet.net.

Thornton Street, Hamden, CT 06517-1321. Submissions and requests for permission to reprint articles should be made to this address or to editor@cthumanist.org. Please include a SASE to have material returned. We welcome letters, articles, photographs,

poetry, comic strips, news items, cartoons and other illustrations related to humanism. Approximate circulation: 120 copies. Annual subscription price \$10.00, included in membership.

The editor would like to thank everyone who contributed to this issue.

<p>MEMBERSHIP</p> <p>Adult \$35 Family \$50 Newsletter Only \$10</p> <p>In cases of financial hardship, the association may waive the membership fee. Please mail checks for annual membership payable to Humanist Association of Central Connecticut to: Humanist Association of Central Connecticut, 27 Thornton Street, Hamden, CT 06517-1321.</p>	<p>Name(s): _____</p> <p>Address: _____</p> <p>Telephone: _____</p> <p>E-Mail Address: _____</p> <p>Please add me to the e-mail Announce List (circle one): YES NO</p> <p>Comments: _____</p>
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